

companies of the regiment that were known to contain guilty members, holding that the innocent members had entered into a conspiracy of silence to protect their guilty associates, thereby violating their oaths of enlistment by refusing to help discover the criminals. The President's action led to a bitter partisan debate in the Senate, led by Senator Foraker of Ohio, which continued for many weeks, but in the end the President's course was sustained. Letters that he wrote at the time disclose his feelings and motives in the case. Writing to Mr. Silas McBee, editor of *The Churchman* on November 27, 1906, he said:

"I have been amazed and indignant at the attitude of the negroes and of shortsighted white sentimentalists as to my action. It has been shown conclusively that some of these troops made a midnight murderous and entirely unprovoked assault upon the citizens of Brownsville—for the fact that some of their number had been slighted by some of the citizens of Brownsville, though warranting criticism upon Brownsville, is not to be considered for a moment as provocation for such a murderous assault. All the men of the companies concerned, including their veteran non-commissioned officers, instantly banded together to shield the criminals. In other words, they took action which cannot be tolerated in any soldiers, black or white, in any policeman, black or white, and which, if taken generally in the army would mean not merely that the usefulness of the army was at an end but that it had better be disbanded

in its entirety at once. Under no conceivable
circumstances
would I submit to such a condition of things.
There has
been great pressure not only by the
sentimentalists but by
the Northern politicians who wish to keep the
negro vote.
As you know I believe in practical politics, and
where
possible, I always weigh well any action which
may cost
votes before I consent to take it; but in a case
like this,
where the issue is not merely one of naked
right and wrong
but one of vital concern to the whole country,
I will not
for one moment consider the political effect.
"There is another side to this also. In
that part of my